Lytyl John ſyth your tendre enfancye
Stondeth as yet vnder my differences
To vice or vertu to meuyn or applye
And in ſuche age there is no prouidence
Ne comenly no ſadd Intelligence
But as waxe reſſeyueth prynte or fygure
So childrey ben diſpoſid of nature

Vyce or vertue to folowe and expreſſe
In mynde/and therfore/to ſtyre & remeue
You from vice/and to vertu addreſſe
That one to folowe/and that other eſchewe
I haue deuyſed you/this lytyl newe
Inſtruccon/acordyng vnto your age
Playne in ſentence/but playner in langage

Take hede therfore/and herkine what I ſaye
And gyue therto/your goodly aduertence
Lete not your ere be here & your herte awaye
But put ye therto/beſy diligence
Leyng aparte al wantolny Inſolence
Lerneth to be vertuous/and wel thewed
Who wil not lerne/nedely he muſt be lewed

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Afore alle thyngy/andy principally
In the morenyngy/whan ye vp rise
To worshipe godyn/haue in memorie
With cristes crosse/loke ye blesse you thrise
Your pater noster/saye in deuoute wyse
Aue maria/with the holy crede
Thenne alle the day/the better shal ye spede

And while that ye be aboute honestly
To dresse your self/& do on your araye
With your felawe/wel and tretably
Oure lady matyns/loke that ye saye
Andy this obseruaūce/vse ye euery daye
With pryme and ouris/withouten drede
The blessidy lady/wil quyte you your mede

Kembe your hede/& loke ye kepe it clene
Your eres tweyne/suffre not fowl to be
In your visage/wayte no spot be sene
Purge your nose/lete noman in it see
The vile mater/it is none honeste
Ne with your bare honde/no filth fro it feche
For that is fowl/and ay vncurtoys teche

Your hondes Wesshe/it is ay holsom thyng
Your naylis loke/they be not gety blacke
Me suffre not hem/to be oū longe growyng
To your araye/I warne you good hede take
That manerly ye fytte it vp and make
Your hood/.gowne/.hosyn/& eke your sho
With al your aray longyng your body to

Kepe you clene/and lose not your gere
And or ye passe/out of your loggyng
Euery garment/that ye shal on were
Awayte wel/that it be so syttyng
As to your degre/semeth acordyng
Thēne wil men saye/forsoth this childe is he
That is wel taught/and louyth honeste

And as ye walke/and passe by the strete
Be ye not nyce of chere/and countenaunce
But loke my child/to folkes that ye mete
Ye speke fayr/with wordes of pleasaunce
Demure and curteys/of your demenaunce
To hym that is your felawe and pere
Eyue ye fair langage/and a frendly chere

Caſte no ſtyck ne ſtone at folke ne beeſt
And where ye walke/beware ye ne rage
For yf ye doo/ye ſhal go brecheles feeſt
Feere not with houdy in felde ne in vilage
Go forth your waye/demenyng your viage
In ſobre wyſe/that men may of you ſaye
A goodly chyldy/ther paſſeth by the waye

And whan ye come to ỹ chirche my litil child
Holy water/ye ſhal vpon you caſte
Byfore ỹ croſſe/with herte meke & mylde
Knele adoun/and knocke on your breſte
Thankyng the good lord ỹ on it didy reſte
And there/for you ſuffryd his ſides to blede
Saye ye or ye ryſe/pat noſter/aue/& a crede

Auyſe you wel alſo/for ony thinge
The chirche of prayer/is hous and place
Beware therfore/of clappe or Jangelyng
For in ỹ chirche/it is a ful grete treſpaas
And a vilen of ſuche/as lackyth grace
There be ye demure/and kepe ye ſilence
And ſerue ye god/with al your diligence

To helpe the preest/ whan he saith masse
Whan it shal happen you or betyde
Remeue not fer/ne from his presence passe
Knele or stonde ye/ deuoutly hym besyde
And not to nygh your cõge muste be applide
Tanswere hym/ with toys ful moderate
Auyse you wel/ my lityl childe algate.

To mynystre/ with deuoute reuerence
Loke ye do/ youre humble obseruaũce
Debonairly/ with due obedyence
Circumspectly/ with euery circumstaunce
Of port and chere/ of goodly countenaũce
Remembryng wel the lordy/ a loue is he
Whom to serue/ is gretest liberte

And whan ye speke/ loke mey ỹ the face
With sobre chere/ and goodly semblaunce
Caste not your eye a syde/ ỹ other place
For that is a token of wantoun̄ inconstãce
Whiche wil appeyre your name & disauaũce
The wise mã saith who hath these thrigis thre
Is not lyke a goody may for to be

Jn herte he seith/ Who that is inconstante
A Wauerynge eye/ glydynge sodeynly
Fro place to place/ & afoot Variante
That in no place/ abydeth stably
These ben ỳ signes/ the Wisemā seith sikerly
Of suche a Wight/ as is vnmanerly nyce
And is ful likely disposid vnto vyce

Awayte my childe/ whan ye stāde atte table
Of maister or souerayn/ whether it be
Appl ye you for to be seruysable
That no defaute in you foundē be
Loke/ who doth best/ and hym ensiewe ye
And in especyal/ vse ye attendaunce
Wherein ye shal your self best auaunce

As ye be comanded/ so do ye algate
Be not causeles/ fro the table absent
Jt is a grete plesure/ to the hyghe estate
To see his seruauntis aboute hym present
Haunte no halke/ for thēne ye Wil be shente
Lete maner & mesure/ be your gydes eweyne
So shal ye best plese/ J dar sauely seyne

Reward also the loke and contenaunce
Of your maister/or of your souereyne
So shal ye best preue what is his plesaūce
Or els displesaunce/this is soth sertayne
The chere discouerith/oftey both tweyne
And eke ỹ chere/somtyme may you addresse
Ty thīgis/ỹ lāgage may not them expresse

And that ye her loke/kepe alway secree
Besy reporte/of mischief is chief norysse
Mykyl langage/may not al saluēles bee
Thēne do my childe/as techeth you the Wyse
Whiche vnto you/this lesson doth deuyse
Here and see/and be stylle ỹ euery prees
Passe forth your way ỹ scilence & ỹ pres

And yet ỹ auenture/yf the caas require
Ye may speke/but ye muste the me caas
Seuē cōdicōns obserue/as ye may nowe hyre
Auyse you wel/what ye saye/& ỹ what place
Of whom/& to whom ỹ your mynde cōpace
How ye shal speke/& whan take good hede
This cōcerith the Wise may without drede

Wayte my chylde/ye be haue you manerly
Whan at your mete/ye sitte at the table
In euery prees and in euery company
Dispose you to be so compenable
That men may of you reporte for gmēdable
For trusteth wel/vpon your kerynge
Men wil you blame or gyue preysynge

And prynte ye trewly your memorie
For a principyal point of fair noreture
Ye depraue no man absent especyally
Saynt austyn amonesseth with besy cure
How men atte table/shold hem assure
That there escape them/no suche langage
As myght other folke hurte to disparage

This curtoys clerk/writeth in this wise
Rebukynge the vice/of vyle detracōn
What may it be/that of custom & guyse
Hurteth with tunge/or by foule collusiōn
Thabsente/weyue ye for that abusiōn
Suche a detractour/from the table
As vnworthy/and also reprochable

Whan ye ſitte therfore at your repaſte
Amoye ye noman preſente nor abſente
But ſpeke ye ſelfe/for yf ye make waſte
Of large langage/for ſothe yemuſt be ſhent
And whan ye ſpeke/ſpeke ye with good tẽt
Of matters acordyng vnto pleſance
But nothig/that may cauſe mey greuance

Eſchewe alſo tachꝭ of foule vaueyne
Of gredy luſte/with vncurteys appetyce
Prece not to ſone/fro your viand reſtreyne
Your honde a while/with manerly reſpite
Fede you for neceſſite/& not for delite
Demene you with mete/& drynke ſo ſobrely
That ye not ley enfecte with glotony

Enbreche not your keſſel/ne youꝛ napꝛye
Ouer maner & meſure/but kepe hem clene
Enſoyle not your cuppe/but kepe it clenlye
Lete no fat farſione/on your lippes be ſene
For that is foolyſhe/ye wote what J mene
Or than ye drynke/for your owen honeſte
Your lippes wype/and clenly loke they be

Blowe not in your drinke ne in your potage
Ne farse not your dishe to ful of brede
Bere not your knyf/to wardy your visage
For therin is parelle/and mykyl drede
Clawe not your visage/touche not your hede
With your bare honde/sittyng atte table
For in norture/suche thing is reprouable

Lose not your gyrdel/sittyng at your mete
For that is a tacche/of vncurtesye
But yf ye seme/ye be embraced streite
Or than ye sytte/amende it secretly
So couertly that no wight you espye
Beware also/no breth fro you reboude
Up ne doun/leste ye were shameful founde

Be ye husht in chambre/scylent in halle
Herken wel and gyue goody audience
Yf vsher or marchal for ony rumour calle
Put ye Jaugleres to rebuke for silence
Be ye myldy of langage/demure of eloquence
Enforce you vnto hym conformed to be
That any moste good/and hath humanyte

Touche not with your mete/ salt ī the salet
Lest folk apoynte you of vncomyngnesse
Dresse it aparte/ vpon a clene trencher
Fayse not your mouth to ful/ for wātonesse
Lene not vpon the table/ for that rude is
And yf I shal to you playnly saye
Ouer the table/ ye shal not spetel conueye

Yef ye be serued/ with metes delicate
Departe with your felowe/ in gentil wise
The clerck saith/ nature is contēt ꝛ saciate
With mene diete/ and litil shal suffyse
Departe therfore/ as I you deuyse
Engrose not/ vnto your self alle
For gentilnes/ wil aye be liberalle

And what peraas your seruise is not large
Grucheth not/ with frowenyng contenaūce
Ne make therof/ not to mykyl charge
Dispose you to goodly suffraūce
And what ye haue/ take it in suffysaūce
Be ye plesid with suche as god hath you sent
He hath ynough/ that can holde hym contēt

Burnysshe no bones/ With your teth/ beware
Suche houndis tachis/ falle of vnarte/ ye
But with your knyf/ make the bones bare
Handle your mete/ so wel and so clenly
That ye offende not the company
Where ye be sette/ as ferforth as ye can
Remēbryng wel/ that maners make man

And whan that/ ye ete your mete smalle
With open mouth/ beware ye not ete
But loke your lippes/ be closed as a walle
Whan to and fro/ ye trauerse your mete
Kepe you so cloos/ that men haue no cōscite
To saye of you/ ony langage or vilonye
Bicause ye ete your mete/ vnmanerly

Beware my child/ of laughyng oū mesure
Ne at the borde/ ye shal no naylis pare
Ne pyke your teth/ with knyf/ I you assure
Ete at your messe/ and other folkes spare
A glotoy can but make the bones bare
And of ynough/ he taketh neuer hede
He fedith more for lust/ than for nede

And whan ỳ lorde is thyṁe/as of ſeruyſe
Monght repleneſſhed With grete diuerſite
Of mete & drĩke good chere may thẽ ſuffiſe
With honeſt talkyng/and alſo ought ye
With gladſom chere/theme fulſom for to be
The pete ſaith/hou that a poure lorde
Mey may enriche/With chereful Wil & Worde

And one thing my chylde/ye vnderſtonde
Iy eſpecyall /for your owne honeſte
Iy the Water/Waſſhe ſo clene your honde
That your towel/neuer enfoyled be
So foWle/that it be lothſom oy to ſee
Waſſhe With Water/your hondes ſo cleene
That ỳ the towel ſhal no ſpotte be ſene

Lete not your ſpone/ỳ your diſſhe ſtõding
Ne vpon the table/it ſhold not lye
Lete your trenchour/be clene for ony thing
And yf ye haue chaũge/yet as honeſtly
As ye can/make a foyde manerly
So that no fragmẽt/fro your trẽcher falle
Do thus my chylde/ỳ chambre & ỳhalle

And whan another man/ spekith atte table
Beware ye entrupte not/ his langage
For that is a thinge discomendable
And it is no signe of folkes sage
To be of langage/ besy and outrage
For the wyse may saidy/ in his sentence
He sholdy be wyse/ that gyueth audience

Understonde therfore or than ye spekie
Prynte in your mynde/ clerly the sentence
Who that vsith/ a mannes tale to breke
Letteth vnarteysly/ alle the audyence
And hurteth hym self/ for lack of science
He may not gyue answere conuenyente
That herith not fynally/ what is mente

But beware my childy/ also of rehersayll
Of matters/ whiche ley atte table meuidy
It greuith ofte/ and doth men disauayle
Ful many a man/ þ vice hath myscheuidy
Of euyl thingy saidy/ is werse contryuidy
Suche reportis/ alway my childy eschewe
As may of olde frēdis/ make enemyes new

Aduise you wel whan ye take your disporte
Honest game/ that ye haunte and vse
And suche as ley of vylayns reporte
I counceyl you my chyld/ that ye refuse
For truste ye wel/ ye shal you not excuse
From brecheles feste/ and I may you espye
Playnge at ony game of Rybaudrye

It is to a godly chyld wel syttynge
To vse disportes of myrthe & plesaūce
To harpe or lute/ or lustely to synge
Or in the prees right manerly to daunce
Whan men se a chyld of suche gouernance
They saye/ glad may this chyldis fredis be
To haue a chylde/ so manerly as is he

Exercise your self also in redynge
Of bookes enorned with eloquence
Ther shal ye fynde/ both plesir & lernynge
So that ye may/ in euery good presence
Somwhat fynde/ as in sentence
That shal acorde/ the tyme to occupy
That ye not nede/ to stonde yelly

It is fayr/ for to be comyn/tatyf
In maters vnto purpose acordyng
So that a wyght seme expertyf
For trusteth wel/it is a tedyous thyng
For to here a chylde/multeplye talkyng
Yf it be not to the purpose applyed
And also with/goodly termys alyed

Redeth gower in his vrytyng moralle
That auncyent fader of memorye
Redeth his bookes/called confessionalle
With many another vertuous trayttye
Ful of sentence/set ful fructuosly
That hym to rede/shal gyue you corage
He is so ful of fruyt.sentẽce and langage

O fader and founder of ornate eloquence
That enlumined hast alle our bretayne
To soone we loste/thy laureate scyence
O lusty lyquour/of that fulsom fontayne
O cursid deth/why hast thou ỹ poete slayne
I mene fader chaucer/maister galfryde
Alas the whyle/that euer he from vs dyde

Redeth his werkis/ful of pleſaunce
Clere in ſentence/in langage excellent
Briefly to wryte/ſuche was his ſuffyſaūce
What euer to ſaye/he toke in his entente
His langage was ſo fayr and pertynente
It ſemeth vnto mannys heryng
Not only the worde/but lyterely the thynge

Redeth my chylde/redeth his bookes alle
Refuſeth none/they ben expedyente
Sentence or langage/or bothe fynde ye ſhalle
Ful delectable/for that good fader mente
Of al his purpoſe/and his hole entente
How to pleſe in euery audyence
And in our tunge/was welle of eloquence

Behold Ocklyf in his tranſlacōn
In goodly langage/& ſentēce paſſyng wyſe
How he gyueth his prynce/ſuche exortacōn
As to the hyeſt/he coude beſt deuyſe
Of trouthe.pees.mercy.and Juſtiſe
And vertues/leetyng for no ſlouthe
To do his deuoir & quite him of his trouthe

Requiredy hym/as ayenſt his ſouerayne
Moſt dradyȝ & louydy/Wos excellent hyenes
He auertyſedy/by his Wrytyngy playne
To vertu/apertaynyng to nobles
Of a prynce/as bereth goody witnes
His traytye/entitledy of regymente
Compyledy of entyer trewe entente

Compyled

Loke alſo/vpon my John lydgate
My maiſter Whylome/monke of bery
Worthy to be renomedy/as poete laureate
I praye to gody in blyſſe his ſoule be mercy
Syngyng Per ſplendens that bruenly byrye
Amonge the muſes nyne celeſtyall
Byfore the hyeſt Jubyter of all

Paſſyng the muſes nyne of Elycon
Where is noy pareyl of armonye
Thider I truſte my meiſtres ſoule begone
The ſtereidy paleys/aboue the dapplyd ſkye
There to ſynge ſanctus inceſſantly
Amonge the muſes ix celeſtyall
Byfore the hyeſt/Jubiter of all

Redeth his volumes/ that ben large & wyde
Seuerely set/ in sadnes of sentence
Enlumyned with colours fressh on euery side
Me lacketh witte/ I haue none eloquence
To gyue hym lawde/ after his excellence
For I dar saye/ he lefte hym not a lyue
That coude his cõnyng/ sufficiently discriue

But his werkis/ his laude/ muste nede cõqre
They may neuer/ out of remembraunce dye
His werkis shal his name conueye & bere
Aboute the worlde/ almoste eternely
Lete his olde werkis preyse hym & magnefie
I dar not preyse/ for fere lest I offende
My langage/ shold rather a peyre than amende

Loo my childe/ these faders auncyente
Repeyn the feldes fressh of fulsomnes
The flours fresh they gadred vp & hente
Of siluer langage/ the grete riches
Who wil it haue my lityl childe doutles
Muste of hem begge/ ther is nomore to saye
For of our tunge/ they were both lok & kaye

Ther ony nomaȝ nolde her werkis disteyne
The enlumed tunge/and aureate sentence
Men gete it nolde/by cantel mele & gleyne
Here and there by besy diligence
And fayne wold reche/her craft of eloquẽce
And by the gleyne/it is ful oft seue
Ly whos felde/the gleyners haue rent

And vnto me/age hath bode good morwe
I am not able clenly/for to gleyne
Nature is fayñ of craft/her eyen to borwe
Me lacketh clerenes/of myn eyen tweyne
Segge I maye/gleyne I am not certeyne
Therfore ꝑ werek/I wil playnly rempyte
To folkis yong/more passyng clere of witte

Seche ye therfore/and ȳ eras ye fynde
Such gleynores fressh as haue sõm aparẽce
Of fayr langage/yet take hem & vnbynde
And preue ye/what they be ȳ existence
Colourd ȳ langage/sauerly ȳ sentence
And doubte not my childe/withoute drede
It wil prouffite to see suche thyngis & rede

Yet eft ſones my childy/lete vs reſorte
To thentente of our firſt matere
Degreſſed ſomwhat/for we wold reporte
And reuiue the laude of hem that were
Famous in our langage/theſe faders dere
Whos ſoules in blyſſe/god eternel auance
That lyſteth ſo our langage to enhaunce

Thenke lityl John/I counceyl you that ye
Take hede to the norture/that men vſe
Nelde founde/or auncyent whether it be
So ſhal no man/your curteiſye refuſe
The guyſe & cuſtom/my child ſhal you excuſe
Menys werkis/haue often enterchange
That nolde is norture/ſometyme had be ſtrange

Thingis whilom vſed/ben nolde leyd aſyde
And nelde ſeetis/dayly ben contreuid
Mennys actes/can in no plyte abyde
They be changeable and ofte meuid
Thingis ſomtyme alolde/is nolde repreuid
And after this/ſhal thinges vp aryſe
Yet men ſet nolde/but at lytyl pryſe

This mene I my childe / yͤ ye ſhal haunte
The guyſe of them / that do moſt manerly
But beware of vnthryft Puſſyn galaūte
Counterfeter of vntomyng curtoiſye
His taches ley enfecte with vilonye
Vngyrte . vnblyſſed . ſeruyng atte table
Me ſemeth hym a ſeruaūt nothing able

Wynter and ſomer to his ſouereyne
Capron hardy / no bonet lyſte to auale
For euery word / gruūg his maiſter vbeyne
Auaunt pazler / in euery mannys tale
Abſolon / with diſheueled heris ſmale
Lyke to a pryſoner of ſeynt malowis
A ſomy buſſhe / able to go to the galowis

O I paſſe noxture fy fy for ſhame
I myght haue ſaid he ſhold go haulke & honte
For that ſhold be a gentilmans game
To ſuche diſportes / gentil follies be wonte
I ſayd to ferre / my langage was to blonte
But yet ſir galāte whā ye ſhal bolde or kneele
He goth by compace round as doth a whele

Bracerd so strayt/that he may not plye
But gaderith it/by maner of a Wyndelas
And he ought Wrenche a syde/or a litil Wrie
His geer stondeth thene/ in ful parlos caas
His sho/his hose/doblet/poinct & laas
And yf ought brekē/some tūges ỹ he lady
Wil mocke & saie/a knaue hath broke a lad

Lete galante go/ I mene recheles ruskyn
Take hede my chylde to suche as he commyng
So shal ye best Worshyp conquere & Wynne
Enforce you in al your demenyng
To sholde vertu/& fro folye declynyng
And Waite Wel that ye loue honeste
Whiche is accordyng vnto humanyte

That is for you/to vnderstonde & knolle
That your araye/be manerly resonable
Not appyssh/oy to mockey ne to molle
To nyce araye/that is not commendable
Fetis nelle fonidey by foolis vnpuffitable
That make ỹ World so plainly trāsformate
That men semen almoste enfemynate

Playe not Jack malapert/that is to saye
Bewaye of presumpcõy/bewaye of pryde
Take not ỹ first place my child by the waye
Tyl other be sette/right manerly abyde
Presumptuoꝰ hey often set a syde
And alleday aualydy/as men may see
And he is sette vp/that hath humylyte
(And he is sette vp that hath humylyte)
To commyndy persoñs regarde ye take
Where ye be sette/right in ententyf wyse
Comyng folk/comyng men shal make
To theiz cõyng ye shal make your suzmise
And as they do/ye muste your self deuyse
For this my child/is as the gospel trewe
Who wil be cõyng/he must ỹ cõyng sewe

And one thing/J warne you specyally
To womanhede/take albe alweye
And them to serue/loke ye haue an eye
And theire cõmandementis that ye obeye
Plesant wordes J auyse you to them seye
And in alle wyse/do ye your diligence
To do them plesure/and reuerence

And at this tyme this tretye shal suffise
Disposse you/ to kepe it in your mynde
The doctrine Whiche for you I deuyse
And doubteth not/ful Wel ye shal it finde
To your honour/enrolle it vp and bynde
Right in your breste/and at your riper age
I shal Wryte to you/therof the surplusage

Go lytyl Johy/and Who doth you appose
Saying your quayer / kepe noy accordance
Telle hym as yet/neyther in ryme ne prose
Ye ben expert/praye hym of suffrance
Chyldren muste be/of chyldly gouernance
And also they muste entretyd be
With esy thing/and not With subtylte
Go lytil quayer/submytte you euery Where
Vnder correctiõ of benyuolence
And Where enuye is / loke ye come not there
For ony thing/kepe your tretye thens
Enuye is ful of froward reprehens
And holl to hurte/lyeth euer in a Wayte
Kepe your quayer/that it be not ther kayte

Explicit the book of curtesye.

to the reader.

Here might thou learne the perfect forme to bedyrect
In this thy turbent barke of rudenesse
Wherfore it alle the fame that the ody renne
For herin hast thou painfull industre
Myzed this rowzhe thy booke for vse of the.
Yeat nowe yet gentle thou rouchesafe thy eye
With fore thy yeame did not thy paine refuse

Whose booke hereafter it be the eftsoone and borne
By fame of time wherin all be myxed
Here little breatise, therfore in no wise scorne
For to the reader it yeat prouffitt bringeth
As here but marke, but weat the bestowe
For oftentymes an ill mysse
Wherby the better fruit the sowle yeat youngeth be

finis I. S.